

## MILL CREEK / MULLEN SLOUGH NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING NOTES - JUNE 25, 2008



On June 25, 2008 the City of Auburn staff and King County staff met with neighbors of Mill Creek / Mullen Slough area at City Hall, 25 West Main Street, regarding: the drainage issues happening in the area.

**Staff in Attendance:** DENNIS DOWDY (AUBURN), TIM CARLAW (AUBURN), KIRSTEN REYNOLDS (AUBURN), DON ALTHAUSER (KING COUNTY), ELIZABETH WELDIN (KING COUNTY), GLENN EVANS (KING COUNTY), JULIA TURNEY (KING COUNTY) AND TIM KELLY (KING COUNTY).

**Community Members in Attendance:** DENNIS & MARA HEIMAN, HOWARD & SHARON COTTIER, BOB TIDBALL, ROSEANNA DONLEY, BOB HAESTEAD, TOM & ANA NIRSCHL, ERIC TURBAK, CHARLES TURBAK, CAROL CERIMELE, KARITA WOODBRIDGE, BOB VOS, AARON LITOWITZ AND DAVE DORN WITH SMITH BROTHERS FARM.

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Public Works Director Dennis Dowdy opened the meeting by welcoming the stakeholders and a quick overview of the meeting. Director Dowdy introduced Auburn and King County staff that was in attendance.

Dennis Dowdy spoke about a building moratorium put into effect five months prior and the expiration date on July 23, 2008. Auburn City Council is holding a public hearing on July 21, 2008 to determine if the moratorium should be extended. Dennis Dowdy invited the stakeholders to come speak to the Council about this topic during the public hearing.

The meeting was turned over to Don Althausen, who presented maps to the public. Mr. Althausen reviewed the following maps: river study/agriculture, project review with captions and seven alternatives listed out, lower area of Mullen Slough, Highlighted the Planning Document Report finished in 2002 which included tributary 053 and 045.

- Tributary 053 looked at how to solve the problems, there was no capital project for tributary 053.
- Tributary 045 was limited in its scope – a separate report was prepared; seven alternatives were reviewed.
- Tributary 047 was briefly discussed; there was a diversion approximately 20 year ago.
- All the alternatives areas stored water and protected the streams at the same time.

A draft of analysis was distributed to the audience that listed out seven alternatives:

#### **1. No Capital Improvement Project (CIP), with maintenance of existing drainage**

*The current condition would remain with continued erosion and increased instability of the ravine, causing sedimentation downstream. This would continue the development of the alluvial fan and contribute to loss of capacity in downstream drainage channels. A monitoring plan would be beneficial to monitor the volume and stability of the alluvial fan. Maintenance would include excavation and removal of deposited gravels in the Venture ditch and within the existing Tributary 045 channel in perpetuity, to minimize impacts to downstream properties. A maintenance schedule would be dependent upon the frequency and intensity of storm events.*

#### **2. No CIP with maintenance and the installation of LWD**

*Large woody debris (LWD) would be strategically placed in the Tributary 045 ravine to increase channel roughness and stabilize mobile sediments. Additional investigation would be required to determine the exact locations and scale of LWD placement. This work may reduce the rate of erosion and minimize the transport of gravels to the alluvial fan. Maintenance work would be required to remove sediments and monitoring would be required as in Alternative 1.*

**3. CIP – Construct a berm to direct all of the flow to the Venture ditch**

An earthen berm would be constructed on the alluvial fan to channelize Tributary 045's flows east to the Venture ditch. This berm would limit or remove the risk of an avulsion that would force flows to the north. This berm would localize the depositional area of the alluvium and would reduce maintenance costs. A monitoring plan would be beneficial as in Alternative 1. Maintenance work would be required in perpetuity, but the construction of a berm may reduce maintenance costs. By limiting the depositional area, excavation and hauling costs would be less than maintaining the entire alluvial fan area.

**4. CIP – Construct a tight-line to bypass the unstable ravine sections of Tributary 045**

An HDPE pipe would be installed to bypass flows around the highly erodible and unstable portions of the ravine section of Tributary 045. An inlet structure would be constructed at the top of the ravine, and a soil stability analysis would be required for proper placement and sizing. Maintenance of the inlet structure would be required in perpetuity to reduce the potential of inlet failure. Placement of the inlet structure could alleviate the nickpoint erosion at the top of the ravine.

Tributary 045 receives a base flow from seeps along the ravine portion. This base flow will continue to transport gravels to the alluvial fan. Maintenance and monitoring is recommended as in Alternatives 1, 2, and 3.

**5. Redirect flow to Tributary 047 with channelization to Mullen Slough**

Tributary 045 is the historic mainstem of Mullen Slough, although it currently discharges into the Mill Creek basin via a Venture ditch at the alluvial fan. Alternative 5 would construct an earthen berm on the alluvial fan to channelize Tributary 045 flows to the north to Mullen Slough. A berm would reduce spill-over flooding from Tributary 045 into the 053 subbasin by elevating the basin divided between 053 and 045. A broad compound channel and floodplain corridor for Tributary 045 would be constructed across the Litowitz property and along the unimproved King County 59<sup>th</sup> Avenue South right-of-way to provide a connection to the Mullen Slough. Property owners along the alignment have indicated their support for this design.

**6. Redirect a base flow at the headwaters to Tributary 047**

Construct a low-flow pipe to re-introduce a base flow to Tributary 047 along the historic flow pathway to the north. Additional survey data is required to define the length of the pipe needed to catch grade. The re-introduction of a base flow to Tributary 047 was evaluated by geotechnical engineer, and the limit on base flow was shown to be in the range of 0.5 cfs. This value was used as a target flow in the alternatives analysis. The parcels along the potential alignment are not developed. Property owners along this alignment have indicated a lack of support for this alternative, and have denied access and Right-of Entry requests.

**7. Add flow detention at the headwater of Tributary 045**

A flow detention facility temporarily stores surface water runoff and releases it at a reduced flow rate, but with a longer duration. These facilities are designed to attenuate peak flows or release water to match historical, forested flow rates. A widely accepted Best Management Practice is to release surface water to a channel at rates based upon the historical forested conditions to reduce harmful channel erosion processes.

Elizabeth Weldin spoke about a few of past projects and the agriculture program that has improved some of the drainage. Weed canary grass and sediment was taken out of agriculture ditches, more need to be cleaned out to help improve the area.

Dennis Dowdy talked about right-of-ways and road ownership. There never has been a right-of-way in the area; one constraint of not having a right-of-way is not being able to have side ditches for drainage. Residents would need to dedicate 60 ft. of right-of-way; if this happened the City would take on the responsibility to repair the road. If the drainage problems exist the City will not repair the street because public funds would not be allowed to be spent.

Some resident's concerns included, but were not limited to:

- Water in this area has always flowed north, it is now dried up.
- One man said his son would donate land to help build a fish pond to promote getting the fish habitat back.
- Member of the agriculture board spoke highly of the efforts currently happening. He spoke about issues with permitting and the importance of restoring the "bath tub". He commented that all the water routes down to the Green River need to be widened.
- Dennis Dowdy asked if people along 287<sup>th</sup> would support ditches being dug. There were no specific responses to this question.
- There was a brief discussion regarding the permitting process being difficult because of the Cor of Engineers and approval at the Federal level.
- Stakeholders were concerned about development happening both on the valley floor and on the hillside.

- There was a representative from the Smith Brothers Farm; he explained their problems were not being solved by the cleaning out of the ditches. It helped but it was and will continue to be a highly expensive on-going task done every other year.

**Break out Sessions:** There were four groups broken out by the following categories:

Geology questions were answered by Julia Turney.

Engineering questions were answered by Tim Kelly.

City of Auburn questions were answered by Tim Carlaw and Dennis Dowdy.

Agriculture and drainage questions were answered by Elizabeth Weldin.

**CONTACTS:**

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